



The United States Interagency Council (IAC), which is part of the Domestic Policy Council within the Executive Office of the President and is responsible for the coordination of 20 federal agencies in their response to reduce and end homelessness. The IAC supports and encourages the development of local 10-year plans to end chronic homelessness.

Planning to **end** homelessness – not to manage or maintain it – is new. Inspired by the President's call to end homelessness and by city and county 10-year plans that have been developed across the country – these planning processes have offered new resources, new collaborations and new energy to create solutions.

The United States Interagency Council's work with federal departments and agencies promises new collaborative approaches and new funding opportunities at the national level. Our encouragement of Governors to create state interagency councils on homelessness will create new state level opportunities.

*Philip F. Mangano, Executive Director
United States Interagency Council on Homelessness*



On February 15, 2005, the Long Beach City Council voted to initiate a citywide process for the development of a 10-year Strategy to End Homelessness. This strategy is designed to address the critical problem of homelessness and all related issues through a coordinated community-based process of identifying needs and building a strategic plan to address those needs.

The strategy will end homelessness by investing the City's resources in a coordinated, sustained effort that addresses the underlying causes of homelessness.

This effort will:

- Reduce the number of people who become homeless
- Increase the number of homeless people placed into permanent housing
- Decrease the length of homeless episodes and the disruption they cause
- Provide community-based services and supports that prevent homelessness before it happens and diminishes opportunities for homelessness to recur

To be successful, this 10-Year planning process will require:

- Long-term commitment from the first planning steps to full implementation
- Community time and energy
- Willingness to engage diverse stakeholders and forge new partnerships
- Ability to think creatively about old problems and existing resources

This proposed planning process will establish a community-wide infrastructure that will include:

1. A Steering Committee consisting of approximately 20 members. The Steering Committee will be co-chaired by the Mayor and a private sector leader, Mike Murray, External Affairs Manager of Verizon Communications, and will consist of community stakeholders who are committed to ending homelessness in Long Beach.

The primary responsibilities of the Steering Committee will include: 1) Reviewing Working Group Strategic Goal recommendations; 2) Sharing information with other key stakeholders, community groups and associations; 3) Sharing community input with the Steering Committee; 4) Co-chairing subcommittees; 5) Making key recommendations to the Mayor and City Council, as part of the plan, to prevent new persons/families from becoming homeless while ending homelessness for those living on the streets.

2. This infrastructure will also include a Working Group consisting of approximately 35 community representatives, to be co-chaired by Dave Neary, President, Westland Construction and Kevin Cwayna, M.D., Urban Health Strategist. The Working Group will provide the Steering Committee with information on community input, i.e., received from Working Group Subcommittees and focus groups.

This information will be used to identify issues and problems related to homelessness and identify solutions. The Working Group will then make planning recommendations to the Steering Committee for inclusion in the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness.

3. The third component of this process will be Focus Groups - community meetings with local stakeholders, which will include all interested City of Long Beach residents and business people.

The primary responsibilities of the Focus Groups will be:

- Identifying issues and problems related to homelessness.
- Identifying solutions for homeless issues and problems.
- Making recommendations to the Working Group and Steering Committee for inclusion in the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness.
- Informing the community of opportunities to participate on Working Group subcommittees.

The recommendations resulting from this process will be evidence-based and drawn from the best practices across the country. To ensure successful implementation, this strategy will be research and data-driven, performance-based and outcome-oriented.

Homelessness is a national problem; however, by implementing local solutions, it is a problem we can help prevent and end. This can be done through a community partnership that focuses on new and creative solutions.